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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-01

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P 031532Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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USIA FOR USINFO, IOP/M, IBS, IPS, INA

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: SOPN PFOR LE US

SUMMARY: PRESS REPORTS ON ORIGINAL ASPECT OS
LEBANESE-U S "CRISIS" NEARLY NON-EXISTENT, BUT
DAILY PRESS TODAY REPORTS KAMAL JUMBLATT PRESS
CONFERENCE STATEMENTS THAT LEBANON SHOULD HAVE
PROTESTED MATTER OFFICIALLY TO U S AND CALLING FOR
DEPARTURE FROM LEBANON OF "400 AMERICAN EMBASSY EMPLOYEES."
END SUMMARY.

1. ONLY DEVELOPMENT KEEPING "CRISIS" ALIVE IN DAILY PRESS WAS
COMMENT IN PRESS CONFERENCE BY KAMAL JUMBLATT FOLLOWING
MEETING HIS POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY. AS REPORTED IN MOST
MAJOR DAILIES, JUMBLATT VOICED SUPPORT FOR "DIGNIFIED
POSITION ADOPTED BY PRESIDENT FRANJIEH" AND SAID
LEBANON " SHOULD HAVE PROTESTED OFFICIALLY TO THE U S
BECAUSE NO ONE CAN KEEP SILENT IN THE FACE OF THE UGLY
AMERICAN POSITION." JUMBLATT ADDED: "I BELIEVE IT WOULD
BE BETTER IF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR STAYED IN THE UNITED
STATES AND IF THE 400 EMPLOYEES (MOUAZAFIIN) WHO WRITE REPORTS AND
SEND THEM TO ISRAEL AND WHO HAVE REDUCED THE AMERICAN EMBASSY TO
AN ESPIONAGE CENTER FOR LEBANON AND THE ARAB STATES LEAVE LEBANON."

2. OTHER REFERENCE TO SUBJECT IN DAILY PRESS WAS IN PRO-IRAQ
BEIRUT WHICH CARRIED BRIEF ARTICLE CRITICIZING LEBANESE
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DEFENSE MINISTRY FOR "PERSISTING" IN PURCHASING U S ARMS

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AT COST OF 10 MILLION LEBANESE POUNDS "DESPITE CRISIS IN
LEBANESE-AMERICAN RELATIONS RESULTING FROM IMPROPER
RECEPTION OF PRESIDENT FRANJIEH IN NEW YORK."

3. FEW REMAINING WEEKLIES WHICH HAVE NOT
YET PRESENTED THEIR VERSIONS OF EVENTS CAN BE EXPECTED
TO WEIGH IN DURING NEXT TWO DAYS AS DOES GENERALLY ANTI-WEST
WEEKLY KAL SHAY WITH REPORT TODAY HEADLINED "LEBANEON HAS LEARNED
HOW TO BE ANGRY." REPORT RANGES FROM ALLEGED INTERFERENCE IN
LBANESE ELECTION BY AMBASSADOR MEYER IN 1964 TO BAGGAGE
SNIFFING IN NEW YORK. ALONG THE WAY REPORT CITES LEBANON'S
"EFFORTS TO KEEP FRIENDSHIP" OF U.S. "AND PROTECT
ITS REPRESENTATIVES;" STATES THAT AMBASSADOR GODLEY
"MOVED IN THE INTERNAL SCENE AS IF HE WERE A MEMBER OF
ONE OF THE LEBANESE PARTIES;" AND ADDS THAT LEBANON IS
PREPARED "TO PUSH CRISIS WITH U S TO POINT OF CUTTING
RELATIONS UNLESS WASHINGTON HURRIES TO PRESENT ITS APOLOGY
FOR INAPPROPRIATE WELCOME WHICH PRESIDENT FRANJIEH
RECEIVED DURING HIS VISIT TO NEW YORK."

COMMENT: AS LAST OF WEEKLIES CONCLUDE THEIR REPORTS
ON ORIGINAL INCIDENT, ISSUE BECOMING DORMANT FOR PRESS
EXCEPT AS SUBSEQUENT EVENTS SERVE TO KEEP IT ALIVE. HOWEVER,
FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE, NEW EVENTS OR STATEMENTS LIKE JUMBLATT'S
PRESUMABLY WILL RECEIVE WIDE COVERAGE.
HOUGHTON

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